

BOOK 1 #BEBETTER SERIES

I'M STILL HERE

when the solution seems impossible

A short, succinct essay on depression and anxiety

ROSDER NASCIMENTO

I'M STILL HERE

(when the solution seems impossible)

A SHORT, SUCCINCT ESSAY ON DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

ROSDET NASCIMENTO

**I'M STILL
HERE**

1st edition - #BeBetter Series – Book 1
28050 Madrid

Title: I'm still here - A short, succinct essay on depression and anxiety
Original title: I'm still here - A short, succinct essay on depression and anxiety
Design and cover: Rosdet Nascimento
Published by: Barnes & Noble
More info: rosdet.nascimento@outlook.pt

All rights reserved, including total or partial reproduction in any format.
© 2022 Rosdet Nascimento

*«Yeah, I have it.
But I prefer to say “I battle” depression
instead of “I suffer” with it.
Because depression hits, but I hit back.
Battle on.»*

Anonymous

1

When compared to previous generations, anxiety and depressive disorders are far more common in young people nowadays. When compared to teenagers fifty years ago, high school and college students are five times more likely to suffer from depression, sadness and anxiety. Young adults who are depressed, often struggle with feelings of social isolation and loneliness, which can be particularly difficult for them. This can have a variety of consequences, including the individual feeling isolated and helpless frequently.

As a person attempts to cope with their troubles, substance misuse is an exceedingly common method of dealing with those problems. For persons dealing with a mental illness, overeating, oversleeping, undereating, and not sleeping enough can all be used as coping methods. Aside from self-harming and suicidal thoughts, other more severe difficulties that can arise

as a result of depression or an anxiety illness include failing to attend therapy sessions and refusing to take their prescribed medicine.

However, it is essential to identify that the transition from youth to adulthood can occasionally be fraught with difficulties. It is possible that anxiety or depression will not endure for a lengthy period and will subside as the young adult becomes more centered in the new experiences that will come their way. When a person is suffering from anxiety or depression, they must pay close attention to the length of time that their symptoms continue.

2

When determining whether or not someone is suffering from depression or anxiety, it is possible to observe specific actions. These differ from person to person, but they all provide a method to look at a situation from a different viewpoint and with more awareness.

The following are common indications of depression:

- The absence of pleasure from formerly pleasurable activities.
- Low energy levels, as well as a persistent sense of exhaustion
- Concentration has been impaired, and a negative attitude on life has developed.
- Inability to sleep, as well as inability to return to sleep.
- Increased use of illicit drugs, alcoholic beverages, and other substances.
- Relationships and sexual activities have become less appealing to you.

- Eating significantly more or less than one would normally consume.
- Sadness, hopelessness, and emptiness are all emotions that can be experienced.
- Irritability, impatience, or fury over seemingly insignificant issues.
- Suicidal or dying thoughts regularly.
- Physical disorders that do not appear to have a known cause.
- Academic difficulties that are out of proportion to one's ability.

Symptoms of anxiety, on the other hand, are commonly observed, and include the following:

- Nervousness, restlessness, or tension are all common emotions.
- Fear, panic, or a sense of impending dread or peril.
- having an elevated heart rate for no apparent physiologic cause
- Hyperventilation is merely the act of breathing more quickly.
- There is no apparent cause for you to be sweating and/or trembling.
- You may have feelings of exhaustion or weakness.
- Having difficulty falling asleep or remaining asleep.

- Inability to concentrate or think about anything other than one's immediate problems
- Gastrointestinal problems are not caused by anything else.
- Anxiety-related difficulties in managing feelings.
- Attempting to avoid or desiring to avoid events or situations that trigger anxiety.

There are some of factors that can contribute to younger anxiety and depression. These are some examples:

- **Genetics:** Teenagers who have a family history of mood or anxiety problems may be at greater risk of getting these disorders when they get older.
- **Trauma:** Teenagers who have experienced trauma in the past — such as sexual abuse, violence, or being involved in an accident — may be more likely to feel anxiety and sadness in the future.
- **Environment:** A teenager's social, school, and home surroundings can all affect his or her psychological well-being. Abuse and neglect, divorce in the family, being bullied, poverty, intellectual difficulties, and the inability to fit in are all factors that can contribute to depression and anxiety.

- **Physiological differences between adolescents and adults:**

The structure of teenagers' brains differs from that of adults. Stress levels can rise as a result of changes in the brain circuits of teenagers that are involved in their responses to danger and rewards. Teenagers suffering from depression and anxiety may also have varying quantities of neurotransmitters in their brains, including dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine, according to research. These have an impact on the control of moods and behavior patterns.

- **Substance abuse:** Drug and alcohol abuse can hurt a teenager's mood and lead to depression. Self-medicating their emotions with these substances may become a habit for them.
- **Pressures associated with puberty:** Teenagers who are going through puberty may experience hormonal changes that affect their mood as well as the stresses associated with a changing body, which can cause them to feel different from their classmates.
- **Negative thought patterns:** Depression and anxiety in teenagers may be caused by negative thinking patterns. Teenagers who are exposed to negative thinking frequently — often from their

parents — are more likely to adopt a negative worldview as well.

3

The treatment of co-occurring depression and anxiety can be more difficult than treating each disorder alone in some instances. Even if you receive therapy for one ailment, some symptoms may remain or appear to be interfering with the treatment of another.

As an illustration: The stress of all the things that are going wrong in your life, as well as the thoughts of how things could grow worse, won't let you stop worrying. These anxieties gradually sap your energy and enthusiasm to continue your efforts, leaving you feeling depressed and hopeless as a result.

Social anxiety prevents you from interacting with others in the manner that you would like to. You want to meet new people, yet you wind up avoiding social situations more than you realize. This leaves you feeling lonely, depressed, and guilty, especially when you consider the opportunities that

were missed, yet you are powerless to change your situation.

1. Therapy

Anxiety and sadness can be treated with a variety of various methods of therapy. Interpersonal therapy for depression, for example, offers communication methods that you can use to express yourself more effectively and to have your emotional needs addressed more successfully. Phobias, which are a sort of anxiety, can be treated with exposure therapy, which is a technique that helps you get more comfortable with frightening situations.

Other approaches can be used to treat both problems, including:

- Psychotherapy that uses cognitive-behavioral strategies to identify, confront, and reframe problematic ideas and behavior patterns is known as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT).
- Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) teaches mindfulness practices in conjunction with behavioral approaches to assist you in learning to control undesired feelings and remain present through them rather than getting overwhelmed by your emotions.

- Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) provides skills for accepting undesirable or unpleasant ideas, remaining present, and committing to constructive actions that are consistent with your values.
- Therapy that focuses on problem-solving. In this approach, students learn how to cope with mental health symptoms and life events that create stress and other emotional distress.

2. Medication

Psychotropic medications can also assist to alleviate the symptoms of anxiety and sadness. It does not, however, assist you in addressing the underlying source of your symptoms, which is why your doctor or psychiatrist would often recommend counseling in addition to medicine.

A psychiatrist or other medical professional might prescribe the following medications:

- SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors) and SNRIs (serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors) are two types of antidepressants (SNRIs). The use of these drugs may also help to alleviate the symptoms of anxiety in certain individuals.

- Anti-anxiety drugs, such as benzodiazepines, buspirone (Buspar), and beta-blockers, are used to treat anxiety disorders. These drugs help alleviate the symptoms of anxiety, but they may not be effective in treating the symptoms of depression, as well. A substantial risk of dependence is associated with benzos, thus your physician may recommend that you

try alternative drugs first before switching to benzos.

- Agents that help to keep one's spirits up and steady. Depression symptoms that do not respond to antidepressants alone may be alleviated with the use of these drugs.

3. Other options available

Although these treatments do not replace therapy or medicine, they may still be beneficial when used as part of a comprehensive treatment strategy. The following are examples of other approaches: Supplements for sadness or anxiety include hypnosis and acupuncture.

4. Self love

It is critical to your health and overall well-being that you adequately love yourself. Love for oneself has been found to provide the following benefits:

- it helps you feel better about yourself
- Stress is greatly reduced, and anxiety is decreased.
- Depression is avoided by using this supplement.
- Restores a good night's sleep
- It assists you in overcoming difficult situations in your life.
- It facilitates relaxation even when events unfold in a manner that you did not anticipate or feel as if you are powerless to stop or change them.

When you love yourself, no matter what happens, no matter what other people say or do, you will always feel good and content with your appearance. You will indeed react to your surroundings, but you will always respond favorably to those circumstances. No one can predict when you're going to break down or make a snap judgment. Others will notice this and like your company as a result. It has a positive effect on your interpersonal interactions. For example, if you are now in a terrible state of mind and you begin to love yourself immediately, love will begin to heal you almost instantly. If you desire to be healed by love, the first step is yours to take.

Best books you can read

1. The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression *by Andrew Solomon*

Focuses on: Depression

Type(s): Feeling Less Alone and Greater Understanding/Research

Solomon calls his book “An Atlas of Depression” and once you’ve covered about half of the 688 pages, you start to realize why: this is everything you would ever want to know about depression - the personal experience of it, the medical experience of it, the pharmacological treatments, the history of it, the cultural interpretations of it, and of course, Solomon’s own struggles with it. The book is a lot to take in. What carries the book, though, is the combination of how well-written it is, along with the shocking severity of Solomon’s own story.

2. First, We Make the Beast Beautiful *by Sarah Wilson*

Focuses on: Anxiety

Type(s): Feeling Less Alone and Greater Understanding/Research

I don’t think everyone will love this book. This is mostly due to Wilson’s writing style and, I suppose, the way her brain works. Like a chronically anxious person, *First, We Make the Beast Beautiful* is frenetic and at times, overly-energetic, leaping from story to story, back ten years to ahead five years to childhood to imagined old age, from personal disaster to scientific research to

that thing my meditation teacher told me that, by the way, totally didn't work, but hey, it's funny now, looking back.

I've seen reviews online from anxious people who have commented that the book actually made them more anxious, just by reading it. Obviously, that's not the goal.

But all of that aside, I think this book is the best demonstration of what it is to actually live with severe anxiety and still find a way to function and thrive in one's life. Wilson has suffered from bipolar disorder, eating disorders, manic episodes, and intermittent depression. But the anxiety has always been there. Intensely there. And she's somehow leveraged it to get her places. I've always argued that the key to anxiety is not getting rid of it but merely directing it in more productive ways. The heart of **First, We Make the Beast Beautiful** is the same argument, demonstrated through a vibrant (and slightly crazy) life that is unlike anything else I've quite come across before.

3. Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy by David Burns

Focuses on: Anxiety and Depression

Type(s): Exercises/Action

Godwin's Law famously states that the longer any internet discussion continues, the probability of someone being compared to Hitler approaches 100%. Well, in my experience, the longer an internet discussion about depression, anxiety, or any other mental health problem goes on, the probability that Feeling Good gets recommended to them also approaches 100%. I see this book mentioned everywhere.

That's because if you were going to write a comprehensive, "This is what three months with a CBT therapist would be like," book, full of enough exercises to fill a small notebook, you'd have *Feeling Good*. Burns has done a fantastic job of essentially writing the closest replacement to a real therapist. As a result, pretty much any time I come across someone who needs a therapist but can't get one for some reason, this book is the insta-recommendation.

4. The Happiness Trap: How to Stop Struggling and Start Living *by Russ Harris*

Focuses on: Anxiety and Depression

Type(s): Greater Understanding/Research and Exercises/Action

Harris is probably the most visible proponent of something called ACT or Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. ACT is a relatively new form of therapy that argues that the key to dealing with depression, anxiety, or addiction is to not necessarily to remove bad feelings. Instead, ACT focuses on developing mental tools and habits to simply weather those bad feelings more effectively. Whereas CBT is focused on channeling pain and suffering into more productive interpretations and actions, ACT just says fuck it, bad feelings are bad feelings and they don't necessarily have to mean anything at all, if we don't let them. To me, ACT is one of the more promising recent developments in psychology as it incorporates some of the benefits of mindfulness, with a zest of eastern philosophy thrown in.

The Happiness Trap is also one of the most approachable and enjoyable psych reads out there. The writing is clear and fun, and the exercises are engaging. In my opinion, the best pop psychology books bring some humor and humanity to the subject, and this is one of the few books that pulls that off really well.

5. Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself by *Kristin Neff*

Focuses on: Anxiety and Depression

Type(s): Greater Understanding/Research and Exercises/Action

This book offers expert advice on how to limit self-criticism and offset its negative effects, enabling you to achieve your highest potential and a more contented, fulfilled life.

More and more, psychologists are turning away from an emphasis on self-esteem and moving toward self-compassion in the treatment of their patients—and Dr. Neff’s extraordinary book offers exercises and action plans for dealing with every emotionally debilitating struggle, be it parenting, weight loss, or any of the numerous trials of everyday living.

Can reading about depression and anxiety actually help you?

I think this list of books will help you better understand depression and anxiety. But you might still be wondering: will they actually help me deal with my depression and anxiety? Well, I'd answer that with "*it depends.*"

I love reading. I read every single day, and I read a lot of books. Well, mostly I write them but... anyway, if you're reading a book with the hopes that it will permanently "fix" you, then no, none of these books will help you.

You could read every single book ever published on money and personal finance, but if you don't apply that knowledge and save and invest your money, you'll still be broke. You'll understand why you're broke really well, but you'll still be broke.

This seems so obvious when it comes to more tangible outcomes like money or losing weight or whatever. But when it comes to our emotional and mental health, we often believe we can just think the problems away.

Getting your emotional and mental shit together is a lived experience. You have to face and endure the pain, not rationalize it away. You can do it with a therapist or a family member or a good friend. In some cases, you might be able to do it alone. But no matter what, it has to be done, not simply thought about and analyzed.

So, yes, these books are helpful—as a starting point. They will give you perspective on what your depression and anxiety really are and where they come from. They will show you that you're not alone, and that others have gone through what you're going through. They will show you that, yes, you can come out the other side a happier, stronger person.

They'll make the work a bit easier. But you still have to do the work.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



My name is ROSDET NASCIMENTO, I'm a Portuguese author, born in June 18 of 1985 in the magnificent archipelago of São Tomé & Príncipe. My mother traveled to Portugal for a better life so I lived almost all my life in the most beautiful village in the world, Cascais.

After many years working in the IT sector, I'm now 100% dedicated to writing. Additionally, I have a social project under development, *The Rosdet Project*.

You can also read from him:

- THE DESTINY OF A LIFE (2021);
- IT'S NEVER TOO LATE (2021).

References

- Book List from Mark Manson's blog – Find it here: <https://markmanson.net/5-books-for-dealing-with-anxiety-and-depression>;
- The content of this eBook can be found in the Paperback and eBook version of NEVER TOO LATE, launched by me on February 2022 (2nd edition). Find it worldwide on [Barnes & Noble](#) and [Amazon](#).